

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 0303

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, OTRA, SV, SU, NO

SUBJECT NORWEGIANS TELL SOVIETS LANDING OF WIVES ON SVALBARD

VIOLATES AGREEMENT AND DENY HOTEL SPACE FOR RESEARCH PROJECT

REFS: OSLO 0226, OSLO 0156 75 OSLO 5640 75 OSLO 5348

SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND TOLD SOVIET CHARGE

JAN 16 THAT LANDING OF SOVIET WIVES ON SVALBARD DEC 23

VIOLATED BILATERAL AGREEMENT AND HE HAS SET IN MOTION

STEPS HE HOPES WILL GET SOVIETS TO WITHDRAW THEM.

NORWEGIANS

HAVE ALSO INFORMED SOVIETS THAT IT WILL NOT

BE POSSIBLE PROVIDE LIVING SPACES FOR LARGE RESEARCH

PROJECT SOVIETS ARE SONTEMPLATING ON SVALBARD NEXT

SPRING.END SUMMARY.

1. NORWEGIANS HAVE DISCREETLY BUT FIRMLY REQUESTED

SOVIETS TO TAKE STEPS TO REMOVE WIVES OF SOVIET AIRPORT

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PERSONNEL WHO ARRIVED ON SVALBARD DEC 23. FOREIGN

MINISTER FRYDENLUND CALLED IN SOVIET CHARGE A.P. SMIRNOV ON 16 JAN POINTING OUT THAT NORWEGIANS REGARD ARRIVAL OF WIVES AS CLEAR VIOLATION OF MARCH 7, 1974, SVALBARD AIRPORT AGREEMENT.

2. ACCORDING FONMIN POLAR ADVISOR BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN, FRYDENLUND TOLD SMIRNOV ADDITIONALLY HE COULD NOT BELIEVE SOVIETS INTENDED TO HARM BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THEIR COUNTRIES BUT THIS CLEARLY WAS WHAT AEROFLOT'S ACTION WOULD DO. IT WAS GENERATING ANTIPATHIES AMONG NORWEGIAN-SOVIET POPULATIONS ON SVALBARD AND WAS GIVING THE IMPRESSION IN OSLO THAT NORWAY WAS NOT ABLE TO ASSERT ITS SOVEREIGNTY ON ARCHIPPELLAGO. FRYDENLUND SAID IN LIGHT OF THIS HE FOUND IT DIFFICULT COMPREHEND AEROFLOT'S BEHAVIOR AND HE SAID NORWEGIANS ARE ASKING FOR AN EXPLANATION FROM AEROFLOT.)

3. BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN SAID NORWEGIANS INTEND FOR THE WIVES TO LEAVE, BUT THEY DO NOT WANT TO FORCE SOVIETS INTO A BOX WHERE THEY WILL BE EITHER FORCED TO CAPITULATE ENTIRELY OR RIGIDLY DIG IN THEIR HEELS. NORWEGIANS HAVE THEREFORE INDICATED OFFICIALLY THEY SEE SOVIET ACTION AS VIOLATION OF AGREEMENT WHICH WILL HAVE SEVERE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES. THEY ARE NOW TAKING NEXT STEPS, WHICH, IN ACCORD WITH AIRPORT AGREEMENT, IS FOR THE PARTIES TO THE ACCORD TO SEEK TO WORK OUT THE DIFFICULTY. THE NORWEGIAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITIES HAVE NOW INITIATED THIS PROCESS BY WIRING AEROFLOT TO ASK FOR AN EXPLANATION OF THE AIRLINES ACTION. IF THIS STEP FAILS TO RESOLVE ISSUE, NORWEGIANS WILL HAVE TO TAKE MATTER INTO NORWEGIAN COURT AND SEEK TO OBTAIN RULING THAT AGREEMENT HAS BEEN VIOLATED. BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN SAID IN EARLIER CONVERSATION(OSLO 0156) SUCH RULING COULD LEAD NORWEGIANS TO DECLARE AGREEMENT INVLAID. BEFORE THAT HAPPENS THEY HOPE SOVIETS WILL FIND REASON TO WITHDRAW THE WIVES.

4. IN REPLY TO FRYDENLUND , SMIRNOV STATED HE WOULD CONVEY FOREIGN MINISTER'S REMARKS TO MOSCOW. HE SAID HE FELT SURE THERE WAS NO DESIRE TO SEE BILATERAL CONFIDENTIAL

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RELATIONS MARRED. HE VOICED SURPRISE THAT ISSUE HAD ARISEN SINCE THERE IS NOTHING IN AIRPORT AGREEMENT, MINING CODE OR SVALBARD TREATY THAT PREVENTS SOVIETS FROM HAVING THEIR FAMILIES ON SVALBARD. FRYDENLUND INDICATED THIS WAS NOT THE POINT UNDER DISCUSSION.

5. SMIRNOV GAVE NO HINT OF REASONS WHY SOVIETS HAD PRESSED THIS CASE. NORWEGIANS SPECULATE GENERALLY

ALONG LINES THAT THIS IS (A) OSVIET REPLY TO THE STRONG WORDS VOICED IN RECENT MONTHS BY NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT AND STORTING OFFICIALS ABOUT ASSERTING NORWEGIAN CONTROL ON SVALBARD, (B) SOVIETS WAY OF INDICATING THEIR SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP ON ISLANDS, (C) AND EFFORT TO PROVIDE FOR THE WELL-BEING OF SOVIET FAMILIES, AND (D) STEP TO BRING WOMEN WHO HAVE THEIR OWN FUNCTION AS PART OF SIVOET PROPAGANDA AND SECURITY APPARATUS.

6. MEANWHILE, BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN SAID THE SO-CALLED NEGOTIATING TEAM OF VINOGRADOV, JELISEEV, AND GUSEROV WHICH ARRIVED ON AIRPLANE WITH WIVES HAD LEFT SVALBARD ON SAS FLIGHT TO OSLO WHERE THEY MET WITH SOVIET EMBASSY OFFICIALS.

7. REFERRING TO SIVIET REQUEST TO CONDUCT MAJOR RESEARCH PROGRAM IN MARCH-APRIL OUT OF LONGYEARBYEN (OSLO 226), BUCHER-JOHANNESSEN SAID GOVERNMENT HAS INSTRUCTED SYSSELMANN(GOVERNOR) LEIF ELDRING TO INFORM SOVIET CONSUL ON SVALBARD THAT, BECAUSE LIMITED HOTEL SPACE AT SVALBARD MUST BE HELD IN RESERVE FOR OFFICIAL PURPOSES, IT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE FOR NORWEGIANS TO PROVIDE THE LIVING SPACES REQUESTED BY SOVIETS AUTHORITIES FOR RESEARCH PROGRAM USE.

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